

News Release



**Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex
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STILLWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY OF NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Wildlife Refuge System, Refuges across the country will be celebrating by dedicating time capsules to be opened 100 years from that date. All across the nation on that day, each refuge will commemorate 100 years of conservation success by simultaneous events. Stillwater Complex will hold its Time Capsule Dedication on March 14, 2003, at the Churchill County Museum, in Fallon, between 12:00 and 1:00pm. President Theodore Roosevelt himself (portrayed by Mike Johnson of San Diego) will perform the dedication speech. Contents of the capsule will be on display at the event. Following the dedication, the capsule will be closed and will remain on display at the museum. There is no fee - all are welcome to attend.

Beginning with first national wildlife refuge designated at Pelican Island, Florida, on March 14, 1903, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System has grown to include 540 refuges and wetland management districts encompassing 95 million acres. With at least one refuge in every state and U.S. territory, the National Wildlife Refuge System provides sustainable recreation that generates economic support to communities across the country. Today, more than 35 million Americans visit and enjoy national wildlife refuges each year and are a continuing source of recreation dollars spent on food, lodging, and purchases from local businesses for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and other activities.

The National Wildlife Refuge System, the only system of federal land devoted specifically to wildlife, is a network of diverse and strategically located habitats, teeming with millions of migratory birds, serving as safe haven for hundreds of endangered species and hosting an enormous variety of other plants and animals.

When President Theodore Roosevelt made Florida's tiny Pelican Island a refuge for birds in 1903, he wrote the first chapter of America's greatest conservation success story. A century in the making, this story of safeguarding America's migratory birds, animals, and important fisheries keeps getting better and better. There are wildlife refuges in every state, and at least one within an hour's drive of most major cities.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

*For more information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
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